



ECONOMIC SECURITY

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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07 JUL 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR DoD STANDARDIZATION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Non-Government Standards Policies

It has come to my attention that DoD's MilSpec Reform initiative has created some confusion about the Department's policies for the development and use of non-government standards. The confusion seems to center on whether non-government standards must be adopted to be used, and whether performance specifications obviate the need for non-government standards. This memorandum offers clarification on these issues.

DoD adoption policies remain unchanged from what is stated in DoD 4120.3-M, "Defense Standardization Program Policies and Procedures." While adoption is encouraged to provide document visibility and accessibility, it is not necessary to adopt a non-government standard for DoD personnel or contractors to use it.

I understand that some people have mistakenly concluded that only DoD-adopted non-government standards may be used in acquisition. This misinterpretation may be traceable to a statement in Part 10, Section C of DoD Instruction 5000.2, which states that documents not listed in the DoD Index of Specifications and Standards (DoDISS) cannot be used unless they are essential and unique to a program. This statement was never meant to apply to non-government standards. Furthermore, it has been deleted from the forthcoming revision to DoD Instruction 5000.2.

The bottom line is that while adoption is not necessary for use, we strongly recommend adoption of any non-government standard being used. When non-government standards are adopted, the DoD Single Stock Point takes action to make copies of the standard readily available to all DoD personnel without charge. From a standpoint of savings, reduced administrative work, and easy accessibility, adoption makes great sense.

The emphasis on the development and use of performance specifications does not eliminate the preference for non-government standards. One of DoD's key acquisition reform goals is to reduce acquisition costs and remove impediments to commercial-military integration by emulating commercial buying practices wherever possible. Thus, for any items or materials that are normally procured using a non-government standard by commercial firms, DoD activities also should be using a non-government standard.



DoD activities should be developing and using Commercial Item Descriptions - which are a form of performance specification - to purchase commercially available items from those industrial sectors that do not use non-government standards. Performance specifications (including MIL-PRF documents and system-level specs) are to be used wherever practicable to describe military-unique products.

One aspect of the Department's MilSpec Reform initiative is the replacement of military specifications and standards with non-government standards wherever there is a dual-use application. Thus, in those situations where a military standardization document is also used by commercial firms, you should be working with the appropriate standards development organizations to create a suitable replacement non-government standard.

I hope this eliminates all misconceptions about the role of non-government standards in DoD's MilSpec Reform initiative.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Walter B. Bergmann". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "W" and a long, horizontal stroke at the end.

Walter B. Bergmann, Jr.
Director
Acquisition Practices

cc: SIEs
DepSOs